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THE AMERICAN ACTING EDITION

# THE BOY FROM COLLEGE

A Sketch for Four Males

BY

MARION SHORT AND PAULINE PHELPS

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## HOME FROM COLLEGE

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### CHARACTERS.

MICHAEL MALONY.....*An Irishman*  
THOMAS MALONY.....*His son*  
JOHN STUBBLEBY.....*A farmer*  
TIMOTHY STUBBLEBY.....*His son*

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# Home From College

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SCENE:—MICHAEL MALONEY'S *sitting room*. *Discovered*: MICHAEL MALONY admitting JOHN STUBBLEBY to room.

MICHAEL. (*His manner is quick and excitable*) Come in, come in, Mr. Stubbleby. Your hand's trimbling, and the tip of yer nose is red wid anxiety, but far be it from me to make sport of ye, when I have the same symptoms mesilf. And all on account of your Timothy an' me Thomas, comin' home from college on a day's vacation. Shure, me blood's bilin' like hot molasses wid impatience to see the improvement in me offspring. But one thing I won't have, John Stubbleby, and that is for any son of mine to be thinkin' he knows more than what his father does; it would break me proud heart.

JOHN. (*Countrified and deliberate*) Waal, there's one thing I'm cackellatin' on, as soon as my boy comes into the house, an' that is to find out how he is gettin' along with his sundries. Why, accordin' to the money they spend on't, in college, sundries is the most important branch of eddication. I've had to raise Timothy's allowance three times already, jest a payin' for that sundries.

MICHAEL. There comes your boy now, John. Fighting Scotchman, will ye look at him? His learnin's gone into his hands instid of his head. Shure, he's grabbed at that sundries so hard wid

both paws he's swelled thim to twict their natural size.

JOHN. There comes your Thomas close behind him. Sort of a misfortune his sufferin' with the rheumatiz, as young as he is.

MICHAEL. Phwat's the matter wid ye? "Rheumatiz!" Can a jumping jack have rheumatiz? Can a bull frog? Can a Fourth of July fire cracker? When me boy niver had a day's illness in his life?

JOHN. He's got a cane in his right hand now, and carryin' five pounds more of 'em on his back. That either means he's got rheumatiz or he's a dumb fool. I'm hopin' it's rheumatiz. The other disease lies too deep to be cured.

MICHAEL. Will you look at the two of 'em smokin' so hard their faces is hid from the light of day?

JOHN. I reckon they're a doin' that to keep from bustin' out a weepin' when they see us. Boys are pretty tender hearted.

MICHAEL. Tinder hearted? Shure, me own heart is as tinder as a three days auld chicken at sight of 'em.

*(Enter THOMAS and TIMOTHY smoking.)*

MICHAEL. *(With emotion)* Thomas, me bye! Me freckle faced first born! Is it thus you return to the auld roof tree?

*(THOMAS ignores his father, and continues to smoke with bored air.)*

JOHN. Waal, Timothy, my son, I s'pose you're mighty durn glad to get away from them halls of learnin', and back to Pap and Mam for a spell, eh?

*(TIMOTHY turns his back, and smokes with indolent indifference.)*



JOHN. (*After watching TIMOTHY remove boxing gloves*) There's one consolation 'bout them hands, Mike, they come off.

MICHAEL. (*Aside to JOHN*) Will ye notice the airs of me round headed little Mick? I'll soak him in a minute.

JOHN. (*As boys sit in chairs with backs turned*) Sh! I reckon thet's the full-backs we read about in the college papers. It's the proper caper Mike, an' we don't want to be outdone.

(*Fathers cautiously approach sons, and sit in chairs by them, backs turned but looking at them edge-ways, following their fashion of crossing legs, yawning, putting thumbs under arms, clearing throats, other business ad-lib. Sons continue to smoke.*)

MICHAEL. (*Choking as THOMAS emits huge puff from cigarette*) Arrah Mr. Stubbleby, full-back, or no, me indignation's been rising 'til it's at the top of the glass. I must spake or bust. (*Approaches THOMAS*) I'm glad, me bye, you're so overjoyed to see your auld father. Your enchusiasm in greet-in' me was the most gracefully surprisin' act of your life. (*Sudden change of manner from gentleness to severity*) Arrah, you living shmoke house, shtand up there and listen to me interrogations or I'll brain ye! Is the rheumychism and a bag full of canes all you have to show a doting parent for spending his substance on your eddication?

JOHN. (*Snatching cigarette from mouth of TIMOTHY*) Where do I come in that buys your hinky dinky play cigars, eh? If you've swallowed a dictionary and can't speak, open your mouth and cough it up. Sneeze, wheeze, blow your nose. Great Jerusalem, do somethin', or I'll lam you 'til you're black and blue! Do you hear me?

THOMAS. (*Languidly*) I suppose we must go through our paces. Eh, Timothy?

TIMOTHY. Anything to satisfy the old parties. (*Boys rise*)

JOHN. (*Aside to MICHAEL*) "Old party." Be we a goin' to stand that Mike?

MICHAEL. Shtand it? Niver! Give me youngness or give me death! (*To boys*) Phwat have ye learned at college? If you've come home knowing more than I do, Thomas, it's an evil day for you, and if you've come home knowing less, it's an eviler one. Git up! Gee up! Go on! Put on your goggles, shtart up the gasoline power, let go the brake, and navigate thim wheels in your head at the speed of fifty miles a minute, or you'll be at the tail end of the procession. (*Aside to JOHN*) I was findin' out all about thim Billymobiles last week so's Thomas couldn't surprise me with his learnin'.

TIMOTHY. (*To THOMAS*) All ready chappie?

THOMAS. (*To TIMOTHY*) Yep, awful bore though. (*THOMAS and TIMOTHY stand side by side, and chant in concert*) "Alpha, Beta, Gamma, Psi. Rah, Rah, Rah. Whoopsie, Dinkle, Epsilon! Rah, Rah, Rah, Rattlebox, that's all."

(*They sink into chairs, legs stretched out before them lazily, hands in pockets. JOHN and MICHAEL sloop, hands on knees, and stare at boys in amazement. Then MICHAEL stealthily gets golf stick and creeps up behind THOMAS, and JOHN puts on gloves and, striking boxing attitude, gets behind TIMOTHY.*)

MICHAEL and JOHN. (*In chorus*) That's all, is it? (*They sprint around the room after boys, making comical threatening motions*)

THOMAS. White flag, white flag! (*Dodges*)

THOMAS. White flag, white flag.



TIMOTHY. Hands up, hands up, don't you hear us? (*Backs away*)

MICHAEL. (*Chasing THOMAS*) "Rattlebox," is it?

JOHN. (*Chasing TIMOTHY*) You can't "whoopsie dinkle Rah Rah" me.

THOMAS. (*Holding hands high in air*) Call off your dog!

TIMOTHY. (*Hands in air*) We throw up the sponge!

MICHAEL. Thin shtand up there, the two of yez and toe the line loike we used to do at shpelling school, and don't move 'til we've pumped the well of your information dry as a bone. You take the first whack, John, and if that goggle eyed misfortunate of yours don't answer ye respictful, tip me the wink and I'll spill all he has in his head out on the flure, and we'll see what's there a takin' the place of brains.

JOHN. Got most ready to graduate in your sundries, I reckon, hain't ye? What does that study learn you about anyhow?

TIMOTHY. The depression in the money market, mostly, but what's the use of explaining, you wouldn't understand? (*Hastily, as MIKE makes threatening gesture*) It's—why it's economics and trigonometry, and a lot of things like that.

JOHN. I guess I understood 'nometry long before you was born, you smart elik. I used the trigger on squirrels, when I wern't higher than that. Triggernometry is a good thing to learn though, I ain't saying nothing against it.

MICHAEL. Nor me. I'm good at it mesilf. Now, thin, speak up, Thomas.

THOMAS. My favorite study is astronomy, but it takes a long time to tell about astronomy.

MICHAEL. Astronomy, eh? Ass-tronomy, I forbid you a studjyin' it. You're the biggest ass now I iver laid my two eyes on, and I don't want to see

you a growing long ears before me very face. Phwy don't you shtudjy Deuteronomy and learn to do your duty? That's phwat I'd be inquirein'.

JOHN. What 'onomy is it costs you the most, Timothy, seein' there seems to be so many of them?

TIMOTHY. Gastronomy, father. The lobster is an awfully expensive bird to study. And it takes so many small bottles to preserve him. But we have to go outside college to study that. Gastronomy at our class table is a decayed art, isn't it Tom?

THOMAS. (*Chanting*)

Canned! Canned! Every thing canned!  
Come along, mooley cow, lend us a hand.  
Hungry Freshies want freshmeat too—

I composed that one morning at breakfast, but just as I was fishing for a concluding line, the professor threw me out of the window.

MICHAEL. (*Aside to JOHN*) Come here, John. Do I know more than that, or less than that?

JOHN. Mike, there must be as big fools as them two somewhere on this earth, but I reckon they're preserved in alcohol.

MICHAEL. (*Sadly*) Tommie rot, me bye. You have fallen so low in your intelligence I think I'll have to take ye away from the halls of learnin' and make a politician of ye.

THOMAS. (*Startled*) "Away from the halls of learning!" And me the umpire on the base-bail team? Oh, great Cæsar's justly celebrated ghost!

JOHN. (*Despairingly*) Timothy, it will take hard work, but you're all I have left in the world and I must try and keep you self supportin' if I can. Try and forget them 'ometries, for I'm going to take you out of college, strap ye onto the seat of a roller and see if you have sense enough to ride across a ploughed field and back without fallin' off.

TIMOTHY. Out of college! And me the center

rush on the foot ball eleven? O lantern of Diogenes!

THOMAS. (*Aside to TIMOTHY*) This is getting serious. Something's got to be done. Let's try giving them the glad hand. (*To MICHAEL with emotion*) My beloved parent, my dearly beloved parent——

TIMOTHY. (*To JOHN*) My kind father, my adored, gentle father——

MICHAEL. (*To THOMAS*) Go way wid ye. I'll not reconsider my mind. It's a father's duty to save his bye from the ijut asylum if he can. And by keeping ye at home——

THOMAS. But we've got to go back to college. I have just been giving you the razzle dazzles, as it were, I'm not such a fool as I look. (*Laughing hollowly*) Ha! ha! ha!

TIMOTHY. No, we're not such a fool as he looks. Ha! ha! ha!

THOMAS. Don't you see? I've been joking. Ha! ha! ha!

MICHAEL. Joking, eh? No, no, me bye, that won't do. I'm an Irishman and an Irishman can see a joke as far as he can see whiskey. But I see no joke of yours (*Putting hand above eyes*) though I view the landscape o'er. Ah, me bye! it bows me noble forehead in the dust to own it, but though you're me own flesh and blood you're even a bigger fool than you look. (*Half laughing and half crying*) Ha! ha! ha!

TIMOTHY. But Pa, dear Pa, noble effulgent Pa, you won't take his view of it? You'll listen to reason? I've got to finish my college course. Why, Tom and I didn't dare tell you all we had learned for fear you'd get so swelled up with pride—you—'twould give you appendicitis, which is always fatal and sometimes dangerous. Look here, Dad——

THOMAS. We've got to make that night train back to town, and want you to stake us before we go.

Just put your hand in my pocket, and feel all that emptiness.

MICHAEL. I'd rather feel it in your pocket than mine. Go away, you ignorant blatherskite! I don't assassinate wid the loikes av you.

TIMOTHY. Pa, you are the real thing. You've kept me browsing in clover since I entered college and I'll make you proud of me yet. Just listen to me. Pa, I'm on the foot-ball eleven and what I don't know about rushometry isn't worth knowing. But we need new uniforms in a rush and I rushed home to rush you for a little money——

JOHN. I didn't send you to college for the sake of your feet. 'Twas furnishin' the *inside of your head* I was thinkin' of. But you ain't got as much as a three legged stool in it so far as I can find out. No, sir-ee, you don't rush any more money out of me. I'm done.

MICHAEL. Shake hands on it, friend John. (JOHN and MICHAEL shake hands, while boys mournfully kick each other) Run out in the yard, you poor, orphan idiots, run out and play wid your hands and feet 'til we decide what's to become of you, if you keep on in the way you've shtarted out.

TIMOTHY. (To THOMAS) We'll have to make an awful bluff of some kind. We went a little too far imitating the airs of the seniors.

JOHN. Get out, go on, make yourselves scarce.

TIMOTHY. (Tragically) Is it thus you dare to address me? Me who come home to you laurel crowned if you would but open your eyes to see? (Strikes tragic attitude)

THOMAS. Yes, gaze on that high forehead, and then repeat your insults if you can. (Old men stagger. Aside to TIMOTHY) That is a good lead, Tim, keep it up.

JOHN. Mike, do you see anything above my son's high forehead?

MICHAEL. I do. I see his hair.



TIMOTHY. Of course these gentlemen don't know that in addressing me they are addressing the president——

JOHN *and* MICHAEL. Addressing the what?

THOMAS. The president of the college glee club. Behold him with his honors ripe upon him.

JOHN. Say, Mike, if he's got to be president of something or other, that ain't so awful bad now, is it?

MICHAEL. (*To THOMAS*) And phwat's your office, me boy, to shtand around and blow young Timothy's horn?

TIMOTHY. (*To MICHAEL*) Ungrateful parent! You shall not speak thus to my honored colleague. For in him behold the vice president of the same affluent and time honored institution. Show your father what he is insulking. Sing for him, Thomas.

THOMAS. (*Singing up and down scale*) O-O-O-O-O-O——

MICHAEL. Keep shtill, John, don't you be overcome wid thim youngsters. (*To THOMAS*) Any body can roar "O" that's got sinse enough to open his mouth. Sing "Ah" and let me sit on how that sounds.

THOMAS. A-A-A-A-A—(*Sustained tones*)

TIMOTHY. A-A-A-A-A—(*Operatic style*)

JOHN. That's pretty good bellowing. Purt nigh equals our old short horn heifer. But it don't hit me. I ain't goin' to pay for your bein' president of the like of that.

MICHAEL. Nor me for you to be *vice*.

(THOMAS *and* TIMOTHY *sing a line or two of "We Are The Jolly Gay Students"*)

JOHN. Shut your mouth or I'll shut my ears. Sing me a song plain and simple without no ruffles, or lace insertion, or hand paintin', and I'll listen to it, but not 'til then.

MICHAEL. Yis, all thim O's and Ah's and "Jolly Stugents" ain't worth one line of a good auld chune loike "Turkey In The Straw."

THOMAS. Why, Dad, "Turkey In The Straw" is our star tune. It's a classic, a gem of purest ray serene.

JOHN. You don't say so! Land, Michael, we ain't behind the times after all. We're in it if we hain't bin to college an' learned sundries. Look here, Timothy, if you can sing that tune and keep on the key from beginnin' to end, I'll give you all the money you're after. But I don't believe you can do it.

THOMAS. And will you stake me too, Governor, if I show up with the turkey?

MICHAEL. That I will, but it's my belief you'll kill that turkey before it more than chips the egg.

TIMOTHY. Come on, then, join in with us and we'll see how she goes.

*(All sing "Turkey In The Straw" and as they sing, old men, delighted, keep pulling money from pockets and handing it to boys, and boys take it eagerly, continually reaching for more.)*

FINIS.

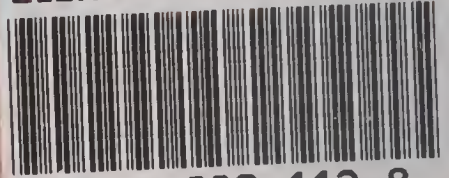








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